

PART V

COMBATING NEW THREATS AND DEVELOPING NEW CAPABILITIES

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CHAPTER 19

THE ALLIANCE'S ROLE IN THE FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM AND PROLIFERATION OF WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

The terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, DC of 11 September 2001 thrust not only the United States but the entire Alliance into the fight against terrorism. Less than 24 hours after the attacks, NATO invoked Article 5 – the collective defence clause of its founding treaty – for the very first time in its history. The political significance of this decision resides in the fact that Article 5 involves a commitment by each of the Allies to consider an attack on one or more of them in Europe or North America as an attack against them all. As a consequence, these attacks were considered an attack on all the members of the Alliance, and member and Partner countries alike firmly and repeatedly condemned the attacks and terrorism in all its forms.

The practical implications of the decision were unprecedented since it was the first time that the Alliance deployed forces and other assets in support of an Article 5 operation. At the request of the United States, the Allies agreed to take eight specific measures of support. One of these was to send NATO Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) aircraft to the United States to assist in patrolling American airspace. The operation was known as Eagle Assist and ran until mid-May 2002. Another was the launch, on 26 October 2001, of a counter-terrorist operation in the Mediterranean called Active Endeavour, which is still operating in the region.

The invocation of Article 5 and the ensuing operations to help guard US airspace and patrol the Mediterranean were followed by another significant “first” for NATO. The Alliance conducted its first peacekeeping operation outside Europe when it decided, in August 2003, to take over the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. This was later followed by other out-of-area missions.

In parallel, a major overhaul of military capabilities was ongoing with the launch of the Prague Capabilities Commitment and the decision to create a NATO Response Force (NRF). These are both explained in the following chapter.

In addition to the above-mentioned, existing NATO operations also took on a role in the fight against terrorism. NATO introduced a number of political initiatives and practical measures in many different areas to help combat terrorism. It adopted a Military Concept for Defence against Terrorism, reinforced

cooperation with Partner countries by agreeing on a Partnership Action Plan against Terrorism and introduced measures against the spread of weapons of mass destruction. An enhanced package of anti-terrorist measures was adopted and new initiatives were introduced to improve cyber-defence, civil emergency planning and civil protection. These measures were bolstered by the commitment to reinforce cooperation with other international organisations on terrorism.

Initial support to the United States

On 4 October 2001, at the request of the United States, NATO Allies agreed to take eight measures to expand the options available in the campaign against terrorism. These eight measures included the following:

- greater intelligence sharing;
- assistance to states threatened as a result of their support for coalition efforts;
- increased security for the United States, and other Allies' facilities on their territory;
- back-filling of selected Allied assets needed to support anti-terrorist operations;
- blanket overflight rights for the United States' and other Allies' aircraft for military flights related to counter-terrorism operations;
- access to ports and airfields;
- the deployment of NATO naval forces to the eastern Mediterranean;
- the deployment of elements of the NATO' Airborne Early Warning and Control Force to support counter-terrorism operations.

As previously mentioned, Operation Eagle Assist was terminated by the North Atlantic Council in May 2002 following material upgrades to the US air defence posture, enhanced cooperation between US civil and military authorities, and a US re-evaluation of homeland security requirements.

Operation Active Endeavour

Since October 2001, elements of NATO's Standing Naval Forces have conducted anti-terrorist operations in the Mediterranean. Known as Operation Active Endeavour, the operation has made use of ships, submarines and aircraft, initially to monitor merchant shipping in the eastern Mediterranean. The

mission was expanded in March 2003 to include escorting non-military ships from Alliance member countries through the Straits of Gibraltar, and again in April 2003 to include compliant boarding of suspicious vessels in accordance with the rules of international law. A year later, the operation was extended to the entire Mediterranean. Escort operations were suspended in December 2003, but the forces remain ready to resume operations when necessary.

Since the beginning of their operational role in 2001, forces assigned to the operation have hailed over 70 000 merchant vessels in the Mediterranean, conducted surveillance operations using ships, submarines and aircraft in order to provide an overview of maritime activity in the area, boarded approximately 100 vessels in accordance with the rules of international law, and escorted several hundred vessels through the Straits of Gibraltar. In addition to NATO's Standing Naval Forces, to which a number of member countries contribute, American and Portuguese maritime patrol and other aircraft, Spanish aircraft, helicopters and frigates, and Danish, Norwegian and German patrol boats have participated in these operations.

With the extension of its area of operations to the entire Mediterranean in 2003, the scope of potential multinational support for Operation Active Endeavour has also been widened to include NATO's Partner countries and Mediterranean Dialogue countries. Russian and Ukrainian offers to contribute to the operation, in the framework of NATO-Russian and NATO-Ukrainian cooperative arrangements, were also welcomed by Alliance leaders.

During their deployment in the Mediterranean, the forces involved in the operation have been called upon on several occasions to participate in emergency operations involving, for example, the evacuation of oil rig personnel threatened by high winds and heavy seas and the rescue of passengers aboard a ferry.

International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan

Military operations led by the United States in Afghanistan resulted in the ousting of the Taliban regime, its replacement by an administration committed to peace and to rebuilding the country, and the disabling of large parts of the extensive al-Qaida network in Afghanistan and elsewhere. Known as Operation Enduring Freedom, this effort has been supported by a number of NATO countries that have, for example, provided special forces teams or contributed planes and ships to work together with US special forces on surveillance, interdiction and interception operations. Offers of support have also been made by a number of other non-NATO countries, including Russia and Ukraine.

Concurrently, NATO forces have played a crucial role in the UN-mandated multinational force initially led by individual NATO countries – the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), which was transferred to unified NATO command in August 2003. The role of the force is to help stabilise the country and create the conditions for self-sustaining peace. In this respect, ISAF can be considered as part of NATO's fight against terrorism since it is helping, albeit indirectly, to put an end to terrorist activity on Afghan territory.

ISAF is a multinational force drawn from NATO and Partner countries. Initially under UK command, the force was under Turkish command from June 2002 and, from February 2003, under the joint command of Germany and the Netherlands, with NATO support in specific fields. Examples of national contributions included airlift capability provided by Belgium, a field hospital provided by the Czech Republic, a medical team contributed by Portugal and engineering and logistical support provided by Poland.

A request from Germany and the Netherlands for NATO support in preparing for this role was approved by the North Atlantic Council on 17 October 2002. NATO assistance was sought in particular in the areas of force generation, communications, and intelligence coordination and information sharing. A force generation conference attended by participants from NATO and Partner countries was held at the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers in Europe (SHAPE) on 27 November 2002 to give the countries an opportunity to make offers of contributions and to identify and discuss critical shortfalls that might need to be filled to enhance future capacity. This was the first such conference to take place in support of countries offering to lead a non-NATO-led military operation based on a United Nations Security Council resolution.

Both Operation Enduring Freedom and ISAF continue to benefit from the efforts made by NATO over the past decade to engage its Partner countries in NATO-led operations and from the practical experience gained from Partner country participation in peacekeeping operations in the Balkans. Contributions made by Partner countries to operations aimed at rooting out terrorism and assisting the Afghan government in stabilising the country have included crucial basing and overflight rights provided by Caucasian and Central Asian countries; infantry, military police, nuclear, biological and chemical protection and transportation assets from Romania – a country that has since become a member of NATO; engineering support from Russia and from Slovakia, which became a member of NATO in 2004; and an intelligence unit deployed to ISAF headquarters by Sweden.

The evolution of NATO's role with respect to ISAF in Afghanistan is described in more detail in Part IV.

Anti-terrorist operations in the Balkans

NATO operations in the Balkans have contributed to making that region less prone to terrorist activities. Action has been taken by NATO-led forces against local terrorist groups with links to the al-Qaida network, as part of the wider campaign against terrorism, particularly through measures aimed at curtailing illegal movements of people, arms and drugs.

Military Concept for Defence against Terrorism

A Military Concept for Defence against Terrorism was approved at the November 2002 Prague Summit. It underlines the Alliance's readiness to help deter, defend, disrupt and protect against terrorist attacks or the threat of such attacks directed from abroad against Allied populations, territory, infrastructure and forces, including by acting against terrorists and those who harbour them; to provide assistance to national authorities in dealing with the consequences of terrorist attacks; to support operations by the European Union or other international organisations or coalitions involving Allies; and to deploy forces as and where required to carry out such missions.

The Partnership Action Plan on Terrorism

Together with its Partner countries, NATO has elaborated a Partnership Action Plan on Terrorism (PAP-T). Issued at the Prague Summit in November 2002, the PAP-T provides a framework for cooperation on terrorism and defines Partnership roles and the instruments for fighting terrorism and managing its consequences. Mediterranean Dialogue countries can also participate in activities under the plan.

The Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, the NATO-Russia Council, the NATO-Ukraine Commission and countries participating in NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue all joined NATO in condemning the September 11 attacks and offering their support to the United States. NATO countries continue to make extensive use of Partnership mechanisms to consult with their Partner countries about further steps. They agree that a comprehensive effort comprising political, economic, diplomatic and military actions as well as law enforcement measures is needed to combat terrorism; in other words, a long-term, multifaceted approach involving NATO as a whole but also involving all the Allies individually, both as members of the Alliance and as members of the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the European Union.

Protecting against weapons of mass destruction

At the Prague Summit in November 2002, NATO governments endorsed the implementation of five nuclear, biological and chemical (NBC) defence initiatives designed to improve the Alliance's defence capabilities against weapons of mass destruction. These consist of:

- a prototype deployable NBC analytical laboratory;
- an NBC joint assessment team;
- a virtual centre of excellence for NBC weapons defence;
- a NATO biological and chemical defence stockpile; and
- a disease surveillance system.

An enhanced package of anti-terrorist measures

An enhanced package of anti-terrorist measures was agreed at the Istanbul Summit in June 2004. These measures include improved intelligence sharing through NATO's Terrorist Threat Intelligence Unit and other means; improving NATO's ability to respond rapidly to national requests for assistance in response to a terrorist attack; helping to provide protection during selected major events, including the use of NATO airborne early warning aircraft; strengthening the contribution of NATO-led operations in the Mediterranean, the Balkans and Afghanistan to the fight against terrorism, increasing cooperation with Partner countries and with other international and regional organisations; and improving relevant capabilities. They also include a specialised armaments programme endorsed by the Conference of National Armaments Directors at its meeting in May 2004. This programme focuses on ten areas:

- actions to counter improvised explosive devices, such as car and roadside bombs;
- reduction of the vulnerability of wide-body civilian and military aircraft to man-portable air defence missiles;
- reduction of the vulnerability of helicopters to rocket-propelled grenades;
- protection of harbours and ships from explosive-packed speedboats and underwater divers;
- detection, protection and defeat of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear weapons;
- explosive ordnance disposal;

- precision airdrop technology for special operations forces and their equipment;
- intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition and reconnaissance of terrorists;
- technologies to counter mortar attacks;
- protection of critical infrastructure.

Cyber defence

Efforts are being made to strengthen defences against cyber attacks by providing better protection against the possible disruption of NATO and critical national infrastructure, including information and communications systems.

Civil emergency planning

Significant measures have also been taken to improve preparedness to deal with the consequences of possible terrorist attacks. A Civil Emergency Action Plan for the Improvement of Civil Preparedness against Possible Attacks against Civilian Populations with Chemical, Biological and Radiological Agents was developed in October 2001, in direct response to the events of 11 September 2001 and the subsequent anthrax attacks in the United States. Since then, the action plan has been continuously updated to reflect new threat scenarios and lessons learned.

In the framework of the action plan, NATO and Partner countries are working together to develop complementary civilian measures to address the threat. These include:

- an inventory of national capabilities that could be made available to assist a member or Partner country stricken by a terrorist attack;
- use of the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre at NATO Headquarters to coordinate the consequence management assistance offered by member and Partner countries in response to requests by the attacked country;
- international consequence management exercises for civil-military and civil protection units;
- development of guidelines and minimum standards to improve the interoperability of capabilities offered by countries providing consequence management assistance;
- improved protection of critical infrastructure.

Civil protection

In response to the emergence of growing threats to high-profile public events, the Alliance has taken specific measures to make use of its capabilities to enhance the protection of all the participants. The NATO airborne early warning capability and other forms of practical assistance have been made available on a number of occasions to provide protection during major events such as the 2004 European football championships, the Olympic Games in Athens and the Istanbul Summit meeting.

Enhanced cooperation

None of the measures described above negate the need for intensified cooperation with other international organisations able to contribute to efforts to improve defence against terrorism through information exchange and coordinated action. For example, NATO and the European Union have exchanged information on civil emergency planning and in other related fields. NATO is contributing actively to the work of the UN Counter Terrorism Committee, holds regular consultations with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and works together with EUROCONTROL, the International Civil Aviation Organisation and the International Air Transport Association to improve civil-military coordination in air traffic management.

The pattern of measures taken over recent years to combat new threats includes national initiatives taken by NATO member countries, to which other countries, often including other Allied and Partner countries, are contributing. In May 2003, for example, the United States launched a Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), involving a global partnership of countries seeking to halt the flow of dangerous technologies to and from states and non-state actors engaged in proliferation. Eight NATO countries, as well as Australia and Japan, have taken part in this initiative from the outset, contributing expertise and experience in the detection and the deterrence of potential threats. NATO supports and pursues a wide range of political and defence initiatives to deal with proliferation. For more details on this subject, see Part X.

CHAPTER 20

NEW CAPABILITIES

NATO is putting into place a series of measures to help improve the military capabilities of its member countries. Aimed at ensuring that the Alliance can fulfil its present and future operational commitments and fight new threats such as terrorism and the spread of weapons of mass destruction, these efforts build on a comprehensive array of measures taken since the end of the Cold War to adapt the Alliance to new challenges. This is particularly important as NATO takes on new missions in faraway places like Afghanistan, which require forces that reach farther, faster, can stay in the field longer and can still undertake the most demanding operations if need be. Furthermore, these forces must be properly equipped and protected for the more dangerous missions they undertake.

In order to achieve these new objectives, the Alliance introduced three key initiatives that are the main driving force behind the transformation of the entire organisation: the Prague Capabilities Commitment to improve capabilities in critical areas such as strategic lift and air-to-ground surveillance; the streamlining of the military command structure; and the creation of the NATO Response Force.

Plans for an Alliance ground surveillance capability have moved forward and will provide situational awareness before and during NATO operations. To address the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, the Alliance is considering the possibility of missile defence for its territory, forces and population centres. It has also created a Multinational Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Defence Battalion to defend against these threats.

The Prague Capabilities Commitment

The Prague Capabilities Commitment (PCC) succeeded the Defence Capabilities Initiative (DCI) launched at the 1999 Washington Summit, which was designed to bring about improvements in the capabilities needed to ensure the effectiveness of future multinational operations across the full spectrum of Alliance missions, with a special focus on improving interoperability. While DCI contributed to improvements in Alliance capabilities in quite a number of important areas, it was couched in terms of general commitments by member countries as a whole and did not require them to report individually on progress

achieved. The 11 September 2001 attacks on the United States increased both the urgency and the importance of more focused capability improvements.

NATO made firm political commitments to improve capabilities in 400 specific areas which are fundamentally important to the efficient conduct of all Alliance missions. These cover the following eight fields:

- chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) defence;
- intelligence, surveillance and target acquisition;
- air-to-ground surveillance;
- command, control and communications;
- combat effectiveness, including precision-guided munitions and suppression of enemy air defence;
- strategic airlift and sealift;
- air-to-air refuelling;
- deployable combat support and combat service support units.

Defence ministers also decided that this new initiative should be based on firm country-specific commitments undertaken on the basis of national decisions and should incorporate target dates for the correction of shortfalls. In addition, such commitments should further increase multinational cooperation and role-sharing and should be realistic and achievable in economic terms, while representing a challenge to member countries. Moreover, they should achieve mutual reinforcement and full transparency with the related activities of the European Capability Action Plan initiated by the European Union.

While the focus of the new initiative was sharper and involved individual commitments by member countries to specific capability improvements, to be contributed individually or together with other Allies, it concentrated on realistic and attainable objectives. The aim was clear: to deliver the urgently needed capability improvements to enable the Alliance to carry out all its missions, wherever they might occur.

The PCC therefore represents an important effort to ensure that Alliance forces have the means necessary to conduct operations swiftly and effectively for as long as necessary. It is by this agreement that heads of state and government at the Prague Summit committed themselves to substantive capability improvements. While the principal responsibility for doing this lies with the governments of the member countries themselves, collectively the Alliance has put in place measures to track and monitor progress and take action to resolve any problems that arise. The PCC also seeks to identify ways of ensuring the mutual reinforcement of NATO's efforts and those of the European

Union. Success in implementing these challenging but realistic and achievable goals is central to the fulfilment of the wider agenda laid down in Prague.

NATO command arrangements

A further central focus of the transformation process has been the streamlining of NATO's command arrangements, the key elements of which are described in Part III. The function of the command structure is to plan and execute operations, to promote the modernisation and interoperability of Allied forces and to enhance the transatlantic link, which is at the heart of intra-Alliance cooperation. Changes to the command structure reflect these imperatives and assign a particularly important, continuous development role to Allied Command Transformation. This new command incorporates a NATO Joint Warfare Centre, a Joint Force Training Centre and a Joint Analysis and Lessons Learned Centre. Not part of the structure but linked to it are national and multinational Centres of Excellence that provide improved opportunities for training, interoperability, testing and developing military doctrines and assessing new concepts.

NATO Response Force

The establishment of the NATO Response Force (NRF) is an integral part of the transformation of NATO's military capabilities, complementing the Prague Capabilities Commitment and the new command structure.

The NRF was created with unprecedented speed. The significance of this achievement lies not only in the development of the force itself, but in the fact that its establishment affects other areas of capability improvement and acts as a catalyst for the sustained transformation and development of NATO forces as a whole. The NRF is one of the most important outcomes of the Prague Summit.

The NRF is a joint force of land, sea and air elements that can be tailored to individual missions and deployed rapidly wherever the North Atlantic Council requires. It is designed as a force that comprises technologically advanced, flexible, deployable, interoperable and sustainable elements, ready to deploy its leading elements within five days and able to sustain itself without further support for thirty days. It is not a permanent or standing force but one composed of units assigned by member countries in rotation, for set periods, and trained and certified together.

This force aims to prevent conflict or the threat of conflict from escalating into a wider dispute that threatens security and stability. It is capable of undertaking appropriate missions on its own or serving as part of a larger force

contributing to the full range of Alliance military operations. It could therefore be deployed in a number of different ways, for example as a show of force and demonstration of Alliance solidarity in the face of aggression; as a key element of a collective defence operation undertaken, in accordance with Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, as a crisis management, peace support or stabilisation force for operations outside the framework of Article 5, or as an advance force for a larger-scale military operation, pending the deployment of other resources.

The prototype NRF comprising some 9500 troops was activated in October 2003. In the same timeframe, at their informal meeting in Colorado Springs, USA, NATO defence ministers participated in a study seminar designed to focus attention on the conceptual role of the NRF and the decision-making process relating to its potential deployment. At a ceremony in Brunssum, the Netherlands, on 15 October 2003, the new force was presented with its colours by General James Jones, Supreme Allied Commander Europe and the strategic commander of the newly established Allied Command Operations.

In an early demonstration of the force's initial capabilities, elements of the force including components from eleven NATO countries participated in a mock crisis response operation in Turkey in November 2003. The crisis involved a fictional threat to UN staff and to civilians located in a country outside the Euro-Atlantic area from terrorist activity and hostile forces. It called for an embargo on movements of forces and weapons, counterterrorist operations and a visible demonstration of Alliance solidarity, political determination and military capabilities.

Exercises and trials have continued to promote the development of the force on its planned schedule. In October 2004, during the informal meeting of NATO defence ministers in Poiana Brasov, Romania, the NATO Secretary General announced that the force had achieved its initial operational capability.

In September 2005, naval and air elements of the NRF were made available to the United States, following an official request for support after the extensive damage inflicted by Hurricane Katrina. The NRF was also used to provide humanitarian aid to Pakistan following the devastating earthquake of October 2005.

The force will be fully operational by end 2006, with a planned land element of about 21 000 troops, and air and maritime elements of roughly the same size.

Alliance ground surveillance

Significant progress in initiating improvements to capabilities in certain specific fields was made prior to the Prague Summit. In autumn 2002, plans

for an Alliance ground surveillance (AGS) capability, a key element of NATO transformation, took a positive turn with the announcement of decisions on the cooperative development of a radar sensor designed to meet both the needs of the Alliance-owned AGS system and the national requirements of the countries participating in the development programme.

NATO is procuring an AGS system that will give Alliance commanders a picture of the situation on the ground in mission areas. It will consist of a mix of manned and unmanned radar platforms that can look down on the ground and relay data to commanders, providing them with “eyes in the sky” over a specific area.

The AGS system will be produced by the Transatlantic Industrial Partnership for Surveillance (TIPS), a consortium of over 80 companies, including the European Aeronautic Defence and Space Company (EADS), Galileo Avionica, General Dynamics Canada, Indra, Northrop Grumman and Thales. The system is scheduled to achieve an initial operational capability in 2010 and full capability in 2012.

Just as NATO’s airborne warning and control system (AWACS) radar aircraft oversees airspace, AGS will be able to look at what is happening on the ground. AGS will provide situational awareness before and during NATO operations. This is an essential capability for modern military operations and will be a key tool for the NATO Response Force (NRF).

CBRN battalion

Another milestone was reached on 1 December 2003, with the achievement of initial operating capability by the Alliance’s Multinational Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Defence Battalion. Designed to provide capabilities specifically for defence against CBRN threats as well as timely assessments and advice to commanders and forces in the field, this measure is consistent with the NRF concept and will complement NRF capabilities. In its initial formation, the battalion was led by the Czech Republic, which provided some 160 specialists that formed the core of the unit, and thirteen NATO member countries participated.

Missile defence

NATO is pursuing projects aimed at protecting Alliance forces, territory and populations against missile threats. This is in response to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, including missiles of all ranges.

By 2010, NATO expects to have the capability to protect deployed troops against short- and medium-range ballistic missiles by intercepting them in the boost, mid-course and final phases. This active layered theatre ballistic missile defence system will also have the capability to counter aircraft, unmanned aerial vehicles and other aerial threats.

NATO is also examining options for protecting Alliance forces, territory and populations against the full range of missile threats. This full-scale missile defence effort was initiated by NATO heads of state and government at the 2002 Prague Summit, which agreed a new Missile Defence Feasibility Study. The study was led by the NATO Consultation, Command and Control Agency (NC3A) in the framework of the NATO Security Investment Programme. Following a competitive bidding process, and based on NC3A recommendation, an 18-month contract was awarded to the winning consortium to examine the technical feasibility, costs and timescales for a missile defence system based on NATO's requirements.